

Standard USG-1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the United States government—its origins and its functions.

USG-1.3 Compare the characteristics of a limited and an unlimited government, including the idea that a civil society maintains a limited government: how a civil society provides the opportunity for individuals to associate for different purposes, how a civil society allows people to influence the government by means other than voting, how political and economic freedoms can limit government power, and how the government of a civil society differs from the governments in authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. (P)

Taxonomy Level: 2.6-B Understand Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

Students have studied several civilizations, cultures, and time periods that have contrasted the nature of limited and unlimited governments throughout history. There will have been some study of societies attempting to influence government but the historical focus will primarily have been on militant actions (examples – revolutions and rebellions) in addressing a delinquent government. There will have been some exposure but little emphasis on peaceful, historical means of addressing governmental concerns - the US civil rights movement being one notable exception to traditional militancy. Again, students will have done case studies of authoritarian governments. (1-3.2; 5-5.4; 6-3.2; 7-2.1; GS 3.2; GS 5.5; GS 6.1; GS 6.2; USHC 2.5; USHC 8.1)

It is essential for students to know the difference between limited and unlimited government. They should be able to identify characteristics of each and summarize the impact of each form on the lives of its citizens. Given case studies, students should be able to identify a government as limited or unlimited based on its method(s) of operation and the interrelationship it has with its citizens. Students should understand that “limited” is a relative term and the limits placed on government are a direct result of the acknowledged purpose of that government. (See USG-1.1)

It is not essential for students to cite specific examples of limited government or unlimited governments.

Assessment Guidelines:

The objective of this indicator is to compare limited and unlimited governments; therefore, the primary focus of assessment should be comparing the characteristics and functions of these types of government. Appropriate assessment would include having students examine contemporary examples and/or case studies of government and defend whether the government(s) in question is limited or unlimited. Students should be able to classify governments based upon a study of these characteristics.